

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Rapid Tooling, Inc.

Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center

RAPID Tooling Gains Speed

Client Profile:

RAPID Tooling Inc. was established in 1994 as a design house for custom "Quick Turn" tooling for the electronic assembly industry. With mechanical designers, machinists and machining facilities on site, they can go from concept to tool in a very short time. RAPID Tooling employs 23 people at its facility in Plano, Texas.

Situation:

Speed, efficiency, and quality have been paramount to RAPID Tooling's success. However, in 2005, the company had started to outgrow the capabilities of its business process and customer orders were being delayed. Key symptoms included management structure issues, scheduling/delivery delays, and inconsistent quoting and project costs. Owners Dee Claybrook and Dion Casto called upon the Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center (TMAC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to lead the improvement.

Solution:

TMAC specialist, Randy Bohannon, met with RAPID Tooling to get hands-on experience with their facility and to fully understand their needs. The first step was to identify strategic issues. They agreed on four goals: 1) Establish a management system; 2) Define and implement a quote process; 3) Define and implement a system to control procurement and usage of materials and purchased parts; and 4) Establish a sales plan and budgeting process to provide 20 percent growth with 15 percent EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization).

To satisfy the project goals, ISO 9001 Quality Management System was selected. Key elements of the system included defining and documenting business processes and establishing performance measures. Shi Bullard, a Human Resource Manager, was hired to develop job definitions and document responsibilities. Now a system was in place to set objectives, measure results and meet company goals. In order to ensure smooth transition and proper maintenance of the system, TMAC trained all personnel and appointed internal auditors to examine compliance. In December 2006, RAPID Tooling received their ISO registration.

Results:

- * Achieved ISO 9001 certification.
- * Improved on-time delivery from 40 percent to over 70 percent in less than one year.
- * Achieved customer satisfaction ratings of 4.4 on a 5 point scale.
- * Improved vendor delivery by 74 percent.
- * Improved quality by 99.6 percent.
- * Exceeded goals for ordering by 20 percent and shipping by 21 percent.
- * Invested \$250,000 in new equipment.

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Testimonial:

"We learned to work as a team. Simple mistakes that used to cause big problems have been eliminated."

Shi Bullard, Human Resource Manager